

**Statement by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General
for Central Africa and Head of the United Nations Regional
Office for Central Africa, Mr. Abou Moussa
Briefing to the Security Council
18 December 2012**

Monsieur le Président,

C'est pour moi un insigne honneur et un privilège de me présenter de nouveau devant cette auguste assemblée pour introduire le troisième rapport du Secrétaire général sur la situation en Afrique centrale et les activités du Bureau régional des Nations Unies pour l'Afrique centrale (UNOCA).

Monsieur le Président,

Comme vous le savez, mon Bureau a été inauguré en mars 2011. Depuis lors, il ne cesse de jouer un rôle de plus en plus important pour accompagner les États de la sous-région dans leurs efforts visant à relever les défis auxquels ils font face.

Dans la poursuite de ces objectifs, mon Bureau a, au cours de la période en revue, établi et entretenu des relations fructueuses avec la Communauté Économique des États de l'Afrique centrale (CEEAC) et ses États membres. Nous avons aussi développé d'autres partenariats dans la recherche de solutions aux défis auxquels la sous-région est confrontée en matière de paix, de sécurité et de développement.

Tel que relevé dans le rapport du Secrétaire général, mon Bureau s'est donc focalisé sur : la gouvernance politique ; le renforcement des capacités des institutions ; la diplomatie préventive, notamment la médiation et les bons offices ; et l'élaboration d'une stratégie sous-régionale pour lutter contre le terrorisme et la prolifération des armes en Afrique centrale.

A cet égard, permettez-moi de remercier mes collègues de la Division de Politiques et de Médiation et du Comité contre le Terrorisme du Département des Affaires Politiques pour leur contribution inestimable à la mise en œuvre de certaines de ces initiatives.

Dans la même optique, nous avons continué à développer et à entretenir des relations de coopération fructueuses avec les différentes équipes pays des Nations Unies et les représentations diplomatiques de la sous-région. Nous avons également consolidé la coopération que nous entretenons avec le Bureau des Nations Unies pour l'Afrique de l'ouest (UNOWA) dans le cadre de nos efforts visant à relever des défis communs et multidimensionnels.

Par ailleurs, mon Bureau a continué à travailler en étroite collaboration avec divers acteurs et partenaires - y compris dans le cadre du Comité consultatif permanent des Nations Unies chargé des questions de sécurité en Afrique centrale (UNSAC) - pour faire face aux nouvelles menaces que représentent la piraterie maritime, les groupes armés ou terroristes, tels que le M23, l'Armée de résistance du Seigneur (LRA) et *Boko Haram*. En effet, la sauvegarde de la paix et de la sécurité dans la sous-région exige que nous coordonnions davantage nos efforts pour mieux faire face à ces défis.

Mr. President (English)

A critical element for the advent of sustainable peace and security in Central Africa is sub-regional integration. This explains why UNOCA has continued to work closely with ECCAS and other sub-regional entities such as CEMAC as well as the highest political authorities of the sub-region in the pursuit of that goal.

While the overall peace and security situation remains stable and significant progress registered in curbing the activities of armed groups and negative forces, Central Africa continues to experience some challenges in this domain.

Violence perpetrated by armed groups, including in Eastern Congo and countries affected by the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA), and a number of other developments with regional and cross-border consequences greatly challenge our efforts to promote sustainable peace and stability in the sub-region.

However, as the Secretary-General's report shows, there is also good news coming out of Central Africa particularly on the economic front with countries continuing to register significant growth rates.

We have also noted the increasing confidence being placed in the conflict prevention work of the United Nations, particularly UNOCA, by regional actors in Central Africa, including Governments, regional organizations, political leaders and representatives of civil society.

Our growing interactions with those actors and, above all, their multiple requests for support show that there is a growing appreciation that establishing a regional political office in Central Africa was both useful and timely. They increasingly acknowledge that the creation of UNOCA has filled a preventive-diplomacy gap.

The requests we received during the period under reporting pertain to, but are not limited to the following areas: mediation and facilitation of dialogue between opposition political parties and those in government, support for capacity building for regional organizations, mobilization of support and resources from the international community for actors in the sub-region and facilitation of workshops, seminars and training.

I would also like to inform distinguished Members of the Security Council that during the period under consideration, political leaders in Central Africa at the highest level have shown strong determination and commitment in supporting and facilitating the work that UNOCA is doing.

This is the case with our efforts to address the impact of the activities of the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA), which the Security Council, in its Presidential Statement PRST/2011/21, requested my Office to coordinate.

As requested by the Security Council, UNOCA is coordinating the implementation of the regional strategy to address the threat posed by the LRA. The challenges of doing so are numerous. However, perhaps the most urgent step revolves around the need to promptly finalize the LRA programmatic document and mobilize sufficient resources for its full implementation.

Once the programmatic document is finalized, my office, in partnership with the office of the African Union Special Envoy on the LRA, plans to organize a resource mobilization forum early next year with the aim of raising funds for the most critical areas of the strategy.

Another example of political commitment at the highest level demonstrated by regional leaders is reflected in the ongoing efforts to organize a regional summit on piracy and armed robbery at sea in the Gulf of Guinea. You will recall that in its resolution 2039 of 29 February 2012, the Council requested the two regional offices, UNOWA and UNOCA, to support efforts towards the convening of a regional summit of heads of state and government of the Gulf of Guinea. UNOWA and UNOCA have been working closely with regional organizations, including ECCAS, ECOWAS and the Gulf of Guinea Commission, on the preparation of this summit.

As part of those efforts, the Secretary-General of ECCAS delivered a special message from President Idriss Deby Itno of Chad, on 7 December 2012 in his capacity as Chair of ECCAS, to President Paul Biya of Cameroon, on the convening of this important summit.

Another example of the collaborative spirit in the sub-region is the chairing by President Denis Sassou Nguesso of Congo, of the celebration of the 20th Anniversary of the UN Standing Advisory Committee on Security Questions in Central Africa in Brazzaville, on 7 December 2012.

Mr. President,

These are just a few examples of the level of political engagement and commitment among the political leadership in the sub-region on issues of peace and security.

I am glad to note that such mobilization points to a renewed sense of community and commitment on the part of the leaders and organizations in Central Africa.

UNOCA will continue to play its role, as mandated, to mobilize all stakeholders in the sub-region and help shore up these positive trends.

Mr. President,

In spite of the some of the encouraging news coming out of Central Africa, the report before you also shows that actors in Central Africa and, indeed UNOCA continue to face critical challenges that hamper the effectiveness of our combined efforts.

With increasing and competing priorities in the pursuit of its mandate, there is a clear disparity between resources available to UNOCA and tasks that it is required to perform. This is all the more so as expectations from regional actors continue to grow regarding the potential role of UNOCA in addressing some of the peace and security challenges facing the sub region. I have no doubt that distinguished Members of the Security Council are aware of this pressing situation as we endeavour to cope with this predicament by strenuously trying to “do more with less” as recommended by the Secretary General.

Mr. President,

As we stand on the threshold of a new year, UNOCA will therefore place a premium on building on and consolidating the achievements registered during the current year. This will include redoubling our efforts to accelerate the operationalization of the regional strategy to address the threat posed by the LRA through the early finalization of the relevant programmatic document, the pursuit of ongoing efforts to organize the regional summit on piracy in the Gulf of Guinea as recommended by this august body in its resolution 2039 of 29 February 2012 and enhancing our capacity building and institutional strengthening support to sub-regional organizations, particularly ECCAS. We will also continue to focus our attention on the development and finalization of a regional strategy to fight against terrorism and the proliferation of arms in Central Africa pursuant to the Bangui Declaration adopted by UNSAC at its 33rd Ministerial Meeting.

I thank the esteemed Members of the Security Council for their strong and continued support to UNOCA.

I thank you for your attention.